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ABSTRACT

Numerous physical, mental, and behavioral activities that parents and their 3- to 5-year-old children can enjoy together are suggested in this activity guidebook. The guide suggests ways parents can give their children a good start at developing the abilities and ideas that are fundamental to all future learning at home before the children begin school. Printed at the top of each page is one important skill that children can begin to learn before they go to kindergarten or first grade. Suggested activities are preceded by instructions to parents to provide illustrations, then let the child try the activity. The 18 skills presented are based on 18 objectives approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education for children at the end of kindergarten, and include: using arms, legs, and eyes together; using hands, fingers, and eyes together; remembering what is seen; remembering what is heard; communicating with others through expressive language; listening to others; showing interest in words and books; classifying, comparing, and sequencing; understanding numbers; comprehending stories; and controlling and expressing emotions. (RH)

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KINDERGARTEN OBJECTIVES ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION JUNE 8, 1979

1. The student performs tasks involving gross motor skills.
2. The student performs tasks involving fine motor skills.
3. The student remembers visual stimuli.
4. The student determines likenesses and differences in visual stimuli.
5. The student remembers auditory stimuli.
6. The student determines likenesses and differences in auditory stimuli.
7. The student communicates with others by using expressive language.
8. The student is receptive of language in communicating with others.
9. The student expresses an interest in language.
10. The student classifies stimuli on the basis of one of more attribute(s).
11. The student compares stimuli on the basis of one of more attribute(s).
12. The student sequences stimuli on the basis of one of more attribute(s).
13. The student begins to understand the concept of conservation of number.
14. The student interprets and infers on the basis of oral or illustrative selections.
15. The student controls emotions and expresses them in a socially acceptable manner.
16. The student displays a positive attitude toward self.
17. The student displays a positive attitude toward school.
18. The student interacts with others in a socially acceptable manner.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF
3-, 4-, or 5-YEAR-OLDS

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FOREWORD

Learning is an essential part of every child's life. Play and exploration are natural parts of children's need to learn and to satisfy their curiosity about the world around them. While playing, children can develop abilities and ideas which are fundamental to all future learning. Therefore, if we desire to enable each child to learn more, time for play and appropriate play material must be provided.

Each of us has a responsibility for enhancing the development of young children. This booklet was written for parents and other care givers of young children three to five years of age. It offers activity ideas which are appropriate for three-, four- and five-year old children and which are related to eighteen state kindergarten objectives adopted by the State Board of Education.

Learning Through Play is dedicated to the young children of our state with the hope that the book will serve as a source for educational and stimulating play environments.

Charlie G. Williams
State Superintendent of Education

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PLEASE READ THIS FIRST

The years 3, 4, and 5 are most important for a child to learn and develop good habits.

You are your child's first teacher—and the most important one.

When your child is 3, 4, or 5 years old, your child has already learned a lot. Your child **wants** to learn how to do new things, **wants** to help you, and **wants** to please you. Your child is proud when he (she) says, "I can do it myself!"

A child 3, 4, or 5 years old learns best by:

doing things;
playing;
listening;
talking;
watching;
imitating you, other adults,
and other children.

There is no "magic age" at which every child learns to do things. Each child is a **special** little person—different from brothers, sisters, and other children the same age.

What This Book Is

The games and activities in this book are some things which you and your child can enjoy together. You're probably doing many of them already.

At the top of each page is one important skill which your child can begin to learn before he (she) goes to kindergarten or first grade.

These 18 skills are based on the 18 kindergarten objectives approved by the State Board of Education for children at the end of kindergarten. A list of the 18 kindergarten objectives are provided on the inside of the front cover of this book.

If your child is 3, 4, or 5, he (she) can get a good start at home before going to school—but only if you spend some time with your child.

What This Book Is Not

The activities in this book are **NOT** tests for your child to "PASS" or "FAIL."

The activities are **NOT** meant for "playing school" at home.

The activities don't cover **all** the answers . . . or **all** the questions about growing children.

How To Use This Book

Don't do all the things on one page at one time. Mix up **Muscle** games on pages 4-6 with **Mental** games on pages 8-35 and **Behavior** activities on pages 36-43.

A child's body, mind, and feelings all work together.

When you try one activity, you'll see if it works with your child. If it doesn't, **STOP** and try something else. Don't **PUSH** your little boy or girl to do everything in this book. Many children are not ready to do some things yet. That's natural. Don't worry about it.

The **MAIN IDEA** is that you and your child should have **FUN** learning through playing. Play is how children work. . .and learn.

THE CHILD USES ARMS, LEGS, AND EYES TOGETHER.

Encourage your child to use arm and leg muscles. Your child also needs to use eyes to avoid dangers and to judge distances. Your child feels good about himself (herself) when he (she) uses body well.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Run and gallop.

March and dance to music.

Walk on tiptoes.

Walk backwards and sideways.

Ride a tricycle.

Kick a ball.

Roll, throw, bounce, and catch a large ball. Then use a smaller ball.

Rake leaves and pick up sticks in the yard.

Jump up and down in a circle on the ground.

Bowl, using plastic drink bottles and a 6-inch ball.

Throw paper balls into a box and count how many balls go in.

Jump from something 5 inches high, landing on both feet. Later, jump from higher places.

Walk on cracks in the sidewalk and jump over a small grate.

Climb a small tree or fence.

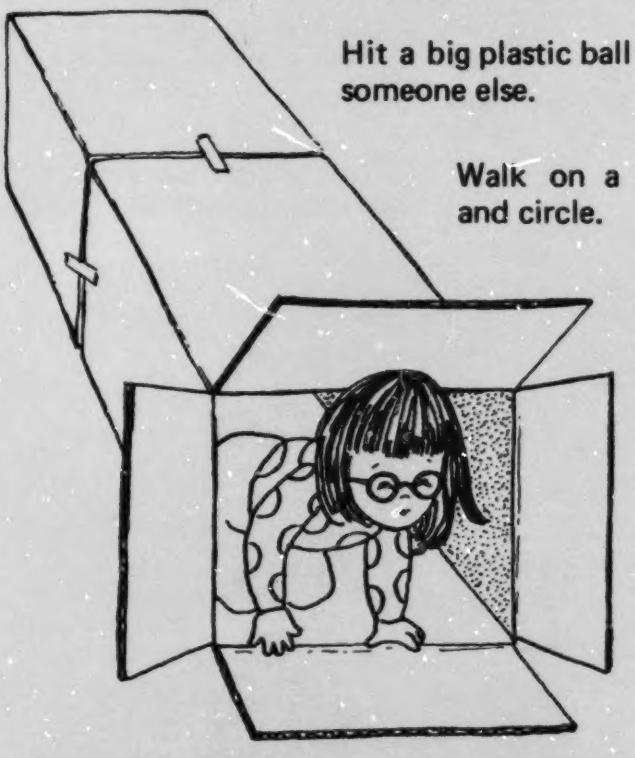
Saw a piece of soft wood or thin branch.

Skip (step, hop with one foot; then step, hop with other foot).

Hit a big plastic ball back and forth to someone else.

Walk on a straight line, zigzag line, and circle.

Wind yarn or string into a ball.



Crawl through big cardboard boxes with open ends that form a tunnel.

THE CHILD USES HANDS, FINGERS, AND EYES TOGETHER.

Encourage your child to use hand and finger muscles. Using finger muscles to scribble is how your child begins to learn to write. Look for circles, ovals, squares, and other scribbling shapes. If your child uses the left hand, let your child do this. Many people are left-handed.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Screw and unscrew lids on jars.

Button shirts, blouses, sweaters, and coats.

Lace shoes and tie shoelaces.

Zip jackets and pants.

Work simple puzzles.

Draw pictures with crayons.

Cut paper with little scissors.

Put stamps on envelopes in top right-hand corner.

Put trading stamps into a stamp book after wetting stamps with a sponge or wet rag.

Hammer nails into soft wood, after you have pounded them part way down.

Drop raw peas or beans into a jar.

Draw pictures with chalk on the sidewalk and then wash the pictures off the sidewalk.

Cut and fold paper plates and paper bags into shapes and strips.

Sew two buttons on an old necktie to make eyes for a "snake."

Make shapes on sandpaper with yarn or string.

Play with play-dough.

Help make play-dough.

Divide dough into two parts.

Cut dough with scissors.

Poke holes in dough with fingers, knuckles, fork, or spoon.

Roll dough thin with rolling pin.

Play in sand.

Sift sand.

Pour sand through a papertowel funnel.

Make lines and pictures with fingers in the sand.

Make shapes with cans, hands, and square pans.

Play paper games.

Fold paper to make a tent.

Roll paper up and put a rubber band around the paper.

(When your child has finished, have him/her sweep up paper and put the paper in the trash basket.)

Paint pictures with liquid starch or fingerpaints. (Cover the floor with thick newspapers to avoid mess.)

THE CHILD REMEMBERS WHAT IS SEEN.

Encourage your child to use his (her) eyes to remember things that he (she) sees. Show your child an object; wait a while, then ask your child to point to, name, or talk about the object.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Recognize his (her) own first name when it is printed.

Point to letters in his (her) name:

- on cereal boxes
- on ice cream cartons;
- on milk cartons;
- in newspaper ads;
- in magazine ads;
- in books.

Point out places where you turn to get home.

Remember where things are seen. (When your child loses a shoe, ask your child to remember where the shoe was last seen and to go find it.)

Play "Slap Jack" with a deck of cards.

Put things back in order. (Show your child a row of 3 different objects. After your child knows the names of the 3 objects, mix up the objects. Then ask your child to put the 3 objects back in a row in the same order. You can play this game with canned foods with 3 different labels, 1 cup and 2 saucers, 3 different toys, or any group of 3 different things.)

Find things. (Show your child 5-6 nuts in a basket or box. Hide the nuts in the room where the child can see and reach them. Let the child find the nuts and put the nuts back in the basket or box. You can also play "treasure hunt" games with cards, books, toys, valentines, and other things your child likes.)

Remember an object. (Show your child one book. Take the book away. Put the book with 2 other books. Show your child the 3 books. Let your child pick out the first book.)

Discover what's missing. (Show your chiid 3 plastic spoons of different colors. Name the colors. Have your child cover his/her eyes and take away one spoon. Ask your child to tell you what color is missing. You can play this game with a book, a ball, and a spoon or any other 3 different things.)

Understand that a picture can represent a real thing. (Cut out a picture of a spoon from a newspaper or magazine ad. Show your child a real spoon to match with the picture of a spoon. Then give your child the picture to find the real thing that matches it. Each time you play this game, add one more picture of something you have in the house so that your child can match the pictures with the real objects.)

THE CHILD KNOWS WHEN THINGS LOOK THE SAME OR DIFFERENT.

Encourage your child to learn that things look the same or different. Knowing that things look the same or look different helps your child to learn, to think, to read, and to write.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Recognize shapes:

round ball or apple;

square box or block;

rectangular door or cereal box.

Move in different ways:

walk;
run;
jump;
hop;
tiptoe;
dance;
march.

Group things together.

Put all forks together.

Put all spoons together.

Put all cups and saucers together.

Put all plates together.

Put all the pans back in the right places.

Put toys back in the toy box.

Put books on the shelf.

Put crayons in the box.

Put the right tops back on jars of food used at a meal (peanut butter, jelly, and mayonnaise).

Match labels that are the same and different. (Save labels from cans and boxes. Show your child labels which are the same and different. Then let your child match the labels.)

See how things look different. (Rub a crayon on a piece of paper over leaves from different trees and see how they look. You can play this game with bricks, wood floor, linoleum, cement, coins, and other things.)

See how your child has grown. [Look at the pictures when your child was a baby or toddler. Let your child see how he (she) has grown and changed. Use old clothes now too small for your child to show how your child's legs, arms, and body have grown.]

Play with water.

Fill a container with water. Put in light things (a cork or piece of paper). See how the light things float. Put in heavy things (a penny or rock). See how the heavy things sink.

Make a hard sponge soft by wetting it.

Watch ice melt into water.

Watch water heated in a kettle turn into steam.

Count how many cups it takes to fill a jar full of water.

Blow bubbles in a glass of water with a straw.

Make bubbles in a bowl using an egg beater.

Pour water into containers with different size tops. (A funnel can be used.)

Match letters. (Cut out one big letter of the alphabet and have your child show you the same letter in a magazine or newspaper ad or on food label. Use different letters each time. Do the same with **numbers** from 1 to 9.)

Match the same color socks from the wash.

THE CHILD REMEMBERS WHAT IS HEARD.

Encourage your child to use his (her) ears to remember things that he (she) hears. Tell your child something; wait a while, then ask your child to tell you what you said.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Tell his/her age and the date of his/her birthday.

Tell address and telephone number.

Say a favorite nursery rhyme.

Sing a short song.

Use the right names of friends and relatives.

Count from 1 to 5 or more.

Answer the phone and recognize a familiar voice.

Say own first and last names. Say parents' first and last names (not just "Mama" or "Daddy").

Name the main parts of the body.

Recognize the different sounds made by objects:

cars;
fire engines;
motorcycles;
airplanes;
ambulances;
telephones;
alarm clocks;
helicopters;
vacuum cleaners;
trains.

Make sounds like different animals:

a dog;
a cat;
a cow;
a horse;
a pig;
a sheep;
a tiger.

Remember a story. (After you have read a short children's story aloud, ask your child to tell you some names of the people or animals in the story. . .what the people or animals did. . .and tell you the story.)

Say a short poem.

Copy a sound pattern:

Tap a rhythm on a pot with a wooden spoon or stick.

Sing and hum a rhythm.

THE CHILD KNOWS WHEN SOUNDS ARE THE SAME OR DIFFERENT.

Encourage your child to learn that things sound the same or different. Knowing that things sound the same or different helps your child to learn to think, listen, and speak.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Sing or whistle a **high** note and a **low** note. Sing or whistle the **same** note twice.

Say some words which rhyme:

cat and rat;
boy and toy;
tall and ball.

Beat on a pan softly and loudly.

Talk in a loud voice, a medium voice, and a whisper.

Talk about when you play the radio:

loud (to dance);
medium (to listen);
soft (to sleep).

Play "I hear something." (Let your child cover eyes and guess what noise you make:

stamp your foot;
clap your hands;
whistle;
tap a spoon on a glass;
ring the doorbell;
whisper a word.

Take turns closing eyes and guessing sounds.)

Use 5 glasses with different levels of water and a spoon to play easy tunes like "Jingle Bells." (Add water to each glass until each glass **sounds right** *when tapped.)*

Make different sounds with water:

Put a small amount of water in one glass. Then put a lot of water in another glass. Tap each glass with a spoon. (The glass with less water will make a **higher** sound.)

Find things that sound the same.

Put a little sand in two empty boxes. Put small twigs in two boxes. Put pebbles in two boxes. Let your child shake each box, and match two boxes that make the same sound.

Recognize sounds in the bathroom with eyes closed:

water running in tub;
gargling;
splashing;
brushing teeth;
flushing toilet;
shower;
knock on the door.

Recognize sounds outdoors with eyes closed:

buses;
trains;
the wind;
birds;
children shouting;
bees buzzing;
dog barking;
a car horn blowing;
thunder;
tires screeching;
water running.

(Tell what makes **loud** and **soft** sounds, **high** and **low** sounds, and **far away** and **near** sounds.)

THE CHILD TALKS ABOUT WHAT HE (SHE) DOES, WHAT HE (SHE) KNOWS, AND WHAT HE (SHE) THINKS.

Encourage your child to talk to you and other people. Listen and give your complete attention to what your child says. Encourage talking in sentences.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Play guessing games.

"Guess what we're having for supper."

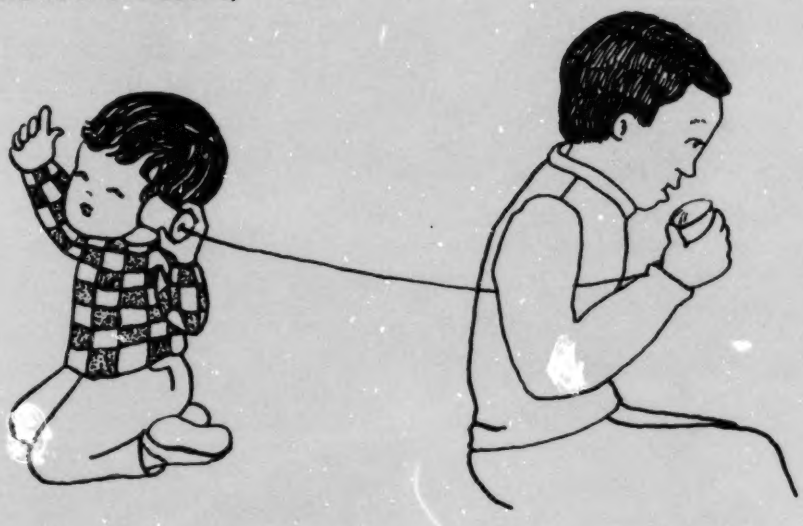
"Guess what I have in my pocket."

"Guess what's in this paper sack." (Let your child feel the sack.)

"Guess what smells so good." (Let your child smell it.)

"Guess what this is used for."

(If your child doesn't get it right, give clues until your child guesses right, make it easier, or show your child!)



Talk on a play telephone. (Make a toy telephone from two paper cups connected with a string tied in the bottom of each cup.)

Say what he (she) likes, doesn't like, and why.

What foods?
What toys?
What animals?
What clothes?

Make three wishes and tell them to you. (Ask why they want each wish.)

Talk about a party or picnic your child went to:

Who was there?
What did you eat?
What games did you play?

Tell you a story about something he (she) did today—as you write down the words. Then read your child's story.

Talk at meals. (Have a meal together as a family without TV or radio at least once a week. Let your child talk to others during the meal.)

Visit places where you, relatives, and friends work:

Show your child things there.

Answer your child's questions.

Introduce your child to people.

Tell you how to do something he (she) knows how to do:

How to make a mudpie.

How to put on pajamas.

How to eat a sandwich.

How to brush teeth.

Tell you how to do something that he (she) doesn't know about (pretending):

How a plane flies;
How to bake a cake;
How to paint a picture;
How a car runs;
How to build a house.

Tell you a story he (she) knows.

Sing you a song he (she) knows.

Say a poem he (she) knows.

Pretend. Give your child old clothes, towels, a cardboard box, and other things to use to pretend that your child is a:

space man;
singer;
baseball player;
mama;
daddy;
Superman;
Wonder Woman;
other people;
animals.

THE CHILD LISTENS TO WHAT OTHERS SAY.

Encourage your child to pay attention to what he (she) hears. Talk to and ask your child questions. Limit what you ask to one or two things.

Read a story and ask your child questions about it.

Ask your child to do **one** thing at a time.

"Please turn out the light."

[Tell your child, "That's good," when your child does what you ask him (her) to do.]

Ask your child to do **two** things.

"Please get the cereal and put it in your bowl."

or

"Pick up your shoes and put them in the closet, please."

Ask your child to repeat what you just said. (If you see that your child did not understand, say it again in different words. Then ask again what you said.)

Tell your child that policemen, firemen, and babysitters keep children safe and that children must do what these people say. Take your child to meet and talk with a policeman.

Explain what a traffic light means. Then have your child tell you:

what a green light tells you to do;

what a yellow light tells you to do;

what a red light tells you to do.

When riding in a car, tell your child to:

lock the doors;

keep arms and head inside the car;

wear a safety belt to prevent injuries.

Tell your child about safety. (When walking close to traffic, hold your child's hand to prevent injuries.)

Listen to children's ETV, TV, and radio programs with your child and afterwards talk about each program.

Listen to music and story records with your child and talk about the records.

Before going to a doctor, dentist, or nurse, tell your child this person helps children stay well and that children must do what they say. Go with your child for medical treatments. Talk about what the doctor said afterwards.

THE CHILD SHOWS INTEREST IN WORDS AND BOOKS.

Encourage your child to like words and books. Show your child that everybody and everything has a name. Read many children's books aloud. Explain that printed words are spoken words which are written down.

Ask your child questions about pictures in a book as you read to your child. (When your child asks what a word means, explain the word.)

Take your child to the public library to get a library card. Then your child can check out magazines, books, and records from the library.

Read your child a story at bedtime or some other regular time every day.

When you and your child walk or ride outdoors, read advertisements or store signs aloud to your child. Explain what the signs mean:

Gas;
Food;
Restaurant;
Bus Stops;
Shoes;
Toys.

When your child asks what signs say:

Read the signs aloud.

Talk about what the signs mean.

Explain signs such as Danger, No Trespassing, Stop, In, Out, Women, Men, Caution, Enter, Exit, Up, Down, Railroad Crossing.

Hold your child in your lap or have your child sit next to you when you read a story. Then your child can hear and see the words and pictures. Ask your child questions about the pictures as you read to your child.

Write "action" words like hop, jump, dance, walk, wave, and smile on separate cards. Paste a picture of each action with the word on a card. Show your child the picture and read the word on the card. Ask your child to do what the card says. Show your child the action picture on the card.

Play word games like "lotto" with your child.

Encourage your child to watch "Sesame Street," "Captain Kangaroo," "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood," and other TV programs for children. Watching TV programs will get your child interested in learning words, numbers, and other important things.

When eating out, read part of the menu aloud with your child. Then ask your child what he (she) wants to eat.

THE CHILD GROUPS THINGS BY SIZE, COLOR, SHAPE, USE, OR SOME OTHER WAY.

Encourage your child to learn to group objects, foods, animals, and people. Your child first needs to know and understand which things are similar in size, color, shape, or use. Then your child needs to be able to take a group of different things and sort them by size, color, shape, and use. Ask your child to tell you why he (she) has done it that way.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Play:

"I see something red."

Guess what your child sees that is red. Then let the winner pick a different color object and let the others guess. This makes a good game in the car, at stores, at home, and outdoors.

Vary this game by guessing things with different shapes and things with different uses, such as:

"I see something round or square."

"I see something to ride."

"I see something to eat."

Be tidy.

Hang up clothes in the closet with other clothes.

Put dirty clothes with other dirty clothes.

Put toys away with other toys.

Put books back on the shelf with other books.

Sort things by shape. (Cut out several circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles from paper or cardboard. Let your child sort the cutouts by shape into four different piles.)

Cut out pictures of:

cars;
trains;
skates;
planes;
bicycles;
buses;
spaceships;
horses;
wagons;
other things people use to travel.

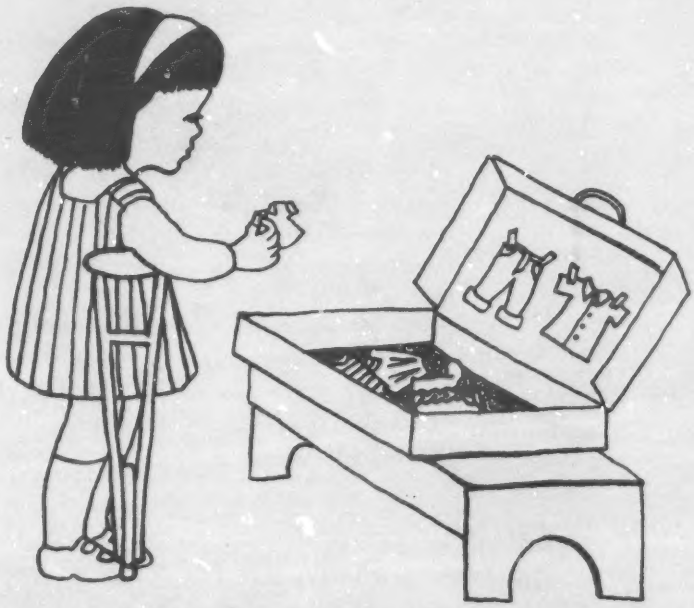
(Put the pictures in a wagon or box.)

At the grocery store name different kinds of:

vegetables;
fruits;
meats;
desserts.

Point out kinds of things in one room:

furniture;
toys;
books;
windows;
doors;
walls.



Cut out pictures of different clothes from newspapers and magazines to put in a suitcase. (Make a "suitcase" from a dress box with a handle.)

Show you which road signs are shaped:

round;
square;
triangular;
rectangular.

Play "Where does it go?" (After the clothes are washed and dry, have your child help you put them away in the right places.)

Put one piece of paper, cloth of a different color, or large colored buttons in each hole of one row of an empty egg carton. Then add pieces of paper, cloth, or buttons of the same color in the second row.

Play "What's it used for?"

Give your child a pencil and a crayon and ask, "What do you use these for?" (to draw with)

Show your child a sock and a sweater and ask, "What do you use these for?" (to wear)

You can use this game with food (to eat), toys (to play with), books (to read), pans (to cook with), and other things.

Let your child decide how he (she) wants a sandwich cut for lunch. Ask, "How are all the pieces the same?" (Cut a sandwich into squares, triangles, rectangles with a plastic knife. Cut a sandwich into circles with a biscuit cutter or round can.)

Help you put away groceries in places your child can reach:

milk and juice in the refrigerator;

cans, sugar, cereal, and bread on the shelves where they go;

paper napkins in a napkin holder.

THE CHILD KNOWS HOW TO COMPARE THINGS.

Encourage your child to learn likenesses and differences in objects, foods, animals, and people. Help your child to know how things are compared with one another. Teach your child words that are used to compare things such as up-down, big-little, top-bottom, cold-hot, tall-short, fat-thin, in-out, near-far, dry-wet, old-young.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Weigh members of your family on a scale and say:

Who weighs the most;
Who weighs the least;
Who is heavy;
Who is light.

Look at a family picture and say:

Who is fat;
Who is thin;
Who is big;
Who is small;
Who is the oldest;
Who is the youngest.

Measure members of the family with a pencil and mark on the closet door and say:

Who is tallest;
Who is shortest.

Move to music.

Walk fast and slow.

Wave the right arm, then the left arm.

Slide the right foot and then the left foot.

March into the kitchen and out.

Bounce body up and down.

Put arms in front of body and behind back.

Play indoor guessing games:

What's **in front** of the lamp?

What's **under** the table and **on top** of it?

What's **above** the chair and **below** it?

What's **big** and what's **small** in this room?

Taste a few grains of sugar and of salt and say which is sweet and which is bitter.

Feel an apple and say if it is smooth or rough.

Smell what's cooking and say how it smells.

Dress and use the words "left" and "right" for arms, legs, hands, and feet as your child puts on socks, shoes, pajamas, shirts, and other clothes. Use the words "back" and "front."

Play games in a store:

Which shirt is big?

Which shirt is small?

What is on the top shelf?

What is on the bottom shelf?

Which pants are light?

Which pants are dark?

Point out things on a walk.

What's far away and what's near?

What's on the left and what's on the right?

Guess which far-away building you will get to first.

Is the weather hot or cold?

Is the street wet or dry?

Is a rock smooth or rough?

Is the sky dark or light?

Which flowers smell sweet?

Is grass soft or hard?

Do the clouds move or stay still?

Begin to learn how time is measured.

What do you do first thing in the morning?

Do we eat breakfast at night?

What do you do at night?

What will you do tomorrow?

What did you do yesterday?

What did you do best today?

Tell what your child did today that he (she) liked best.

Play outdoor guessing games:

What's up high and what's down low?

What grows in the air and what grows down in the earth?

What's tall and what's short?

What's inside the mailbox?

What's outside the yard?

Which car is further away?

Which house is nearest?

What animal moves fast?

What moves slow?

THE CHILD PUTS WORDS AND THINGS IN THE RIGHT ORDER.

Encourage your child to learn to put words and objects in the right order. Using words and putting objects in the right order helps your child to learn to think, read, and write.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Talk in sentences and phrases, not just one or two words.

Line up three toys in a row. Tell which toy is first, second, and third. Tell which toy is on the left, the middle, the right.

Tell you a short story that you have just read. (Don't worry about details; a child forgets.)

Tell what's happened since your child was born. Use the family photo album where pictures have been kept in order. Talk about each picture. Tell who's in each picture, what they're doing, and how old your child was then.

Make biscuits.

Measure each cupful and spoonful.

Roll the dough.

Cut dough into circles.

Put the biscuits in the oven.

Bake.

Take biscuits out of the oven.

Let biscuits cool.

Put some butter or jelly on biscuits.

Eat biscuits.

Put away washed dishes.

Stack pans one inside the other on the shelf where they belong.

Put plates, cups, saucers, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, and other things in their right places.

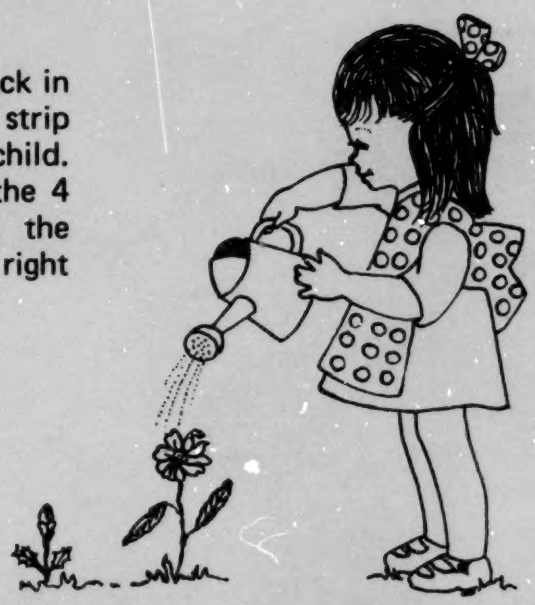
Talk about what letter comes first in child's name. What comes last? What's in the middle?

Begin to count things and talk about:

What number comes after 1;
What number comes before 5.

Sing the A, B, C song.

Put a short, simple comic strip back in order. (Read a 4-section comic strip from a daily newspaper to your child. Then cut the comic strip into the 4 sections. Help your child put the pieces back together in the right order. Then read the story again.)



Plant seeds which bloom at different times of the year, water them, and watch them grow.

THE CHILD BEGINS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT NUMBERS MEAN.

Encourage your child to learn that a group of objects has the same number even when the objects are moved around. First help your child to begin to count things. Then help your child begin to understand that you still have the same number even when you move the objects around.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Count pennies. (Start with 1, 2, and 3. When your child can count up to 3 easily, add 4; then 5; then 6; then 7; then 8; then 9.)

Give each person two cookies.

Count steps.

Give you four cups for drinks.

Count toes and fingers.

Draw two eyes and two ears, one mouth, and one nose on a face.

Ask, "How many fingers on two hands?"

Play card games, such as "Fish," which use counting and numbers.

Play outdoor games counting cars, trees, trucks, horses, cats, dogs, and other things.

Set the table for meals:

Count how many people will eat.

Count enough spoons, forks, knives, plates, napkins, and glasses for each person's place.

Use the words first, second, third.

Put the plates on the first shelf.

Put the games on the second shelf.

Put the cans on the third shelf.

Write numbers. (Start by having your child trace wooden or plastic numbers which your child can feel with fingers. Start with 1 or 2 and stop when your child gets bored. Try again another day. Add new numbers when your child is ready.)

Count pennies. (Put 6 pennies on a table. After your child counts the pennies by touching each one, move the pennies into one group of 3, one group of 2, and 1 by itself. Ask your child if you still have the same number of pennies. Watch to see if your child counts the pennies again, or says the same number. Make this a game and use different things such as cards or buttons to count. Use different numbers of things. It is all right for the child to count each before answering.)

Use a calendar.

About ten days before Christmas, Easter, Halloween, birthdays, vacation, a trip, or some other **special** *event, have your child use a calendar to count the number of days before the special event. Do this every day until the special day.*

THE CHILD UNDERSTANDS STORIES.

Encourage your child to listen to stories that are read and stories that are seen. Simple books, TV stories, made-up stories, and picture books help your child learn to understand what is seen and heard. Children love to hear and see the same story again and again.

Read a story that your child likes several times. Ask questions about the story and the people or animals in the story. Then have your child tell the story to you. What were the names of people and animals? What happened to each one? How did each one feel? How did the story end?

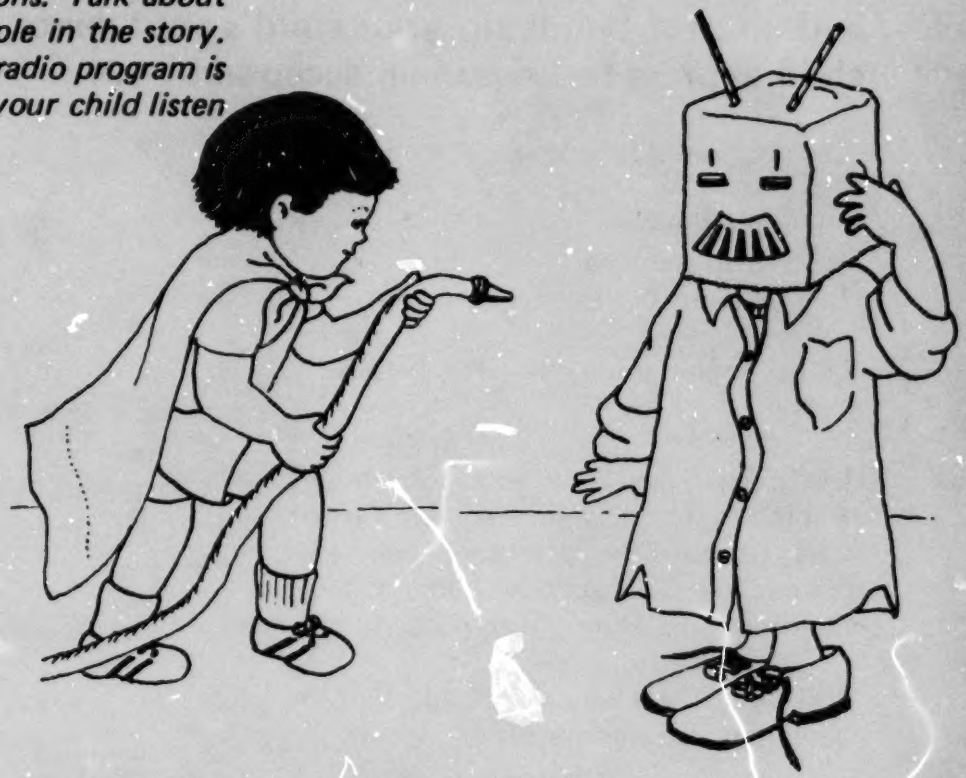
Read a few pages of a new story and let your child "make up" an ending by looking at the pictures. If your child's ending is different from the story's ending, that's good, too.

Point out a picture in a magazine. Ask your child to make up a pretend story about the picture. Talk about the picture together and look for details in the picture.

Show your child photographs of your family and friends at a birthday party, on Christmas, on Easter, on Halloween, on a trip, and on other special days. Ask what is happening in each picture. Who is in the picture? What are the people wearing? What are the people doing? What "things" are in the picture? Look for little details.

Read the first half of a familiar story. Let your child finish telling the story by "reading" the pictures. Help point out details in the pictures, such as a bird in a tree.

After you and your child watch a children's TV show, talk about what happened. Ask questions. Talk about the story and the people in the story. (Know what a TV or radio program is about before you let your child listen and watch.)



When your child finishes a simple puzzle, help your child make up a story about the puzzle picture.

Make up a short story together. You say the first part of a sentence, then let your child finish the story.

Parent: "When I woke up this morning, I saw . . ."

Child: "A big yellow tiger."

Then let your child start another story. . .and you finish the story. (What the child says may surprise you, but accept it.) This game is fun on rainy days inside the house or on a trip in the car.

Act out a familiar story with your child (and other children too). Each person takes the part of one person or animal in the story. . .and moves, talks, and makes sounds.

Act out a real story about something your child did today. Pretend that you and your child are doing what your child did today.

Act out a "make-believe" story.

Let the child act out his (her) story alone and/or with other children.

THE CHILD CONTROLS AND EXPRESSES FEELINGS.

Encourage your child to learn to control and to express feelings. Help your child to obey rules and to show emotions. Self-control builds up your child's confidence and helps your child express feelings in an acceptable way.

Let your child help you:

Make the beds;
Sweep the floor;
Take out the trash.

(Then thank your child for helping.)

Introduce your child to a policeman. Explain that the policeman's job is to keep people safe, that policemen are friends, and that both adults and children must obey policemen.

Talk about the way your child should act when visiting interesting places:

parks;
museums;
fairs;
libraries;
stores;
banks;
farms;
theatres;
restaurants.

Give your child jobs that must be done.

"Please brush your teeth and take a bath."

"Please clean up what you spilled."

"Please put away your toys."

"Please put your clean clothes in the closet."

(First show your child what you expect, offer to help, then praise your child for a job well done.)

When your child is afraid, hold your child close and assure him (her) that he (she) is safe. Tell your child that grown-up people are afraid sometimes, too. Fear can be helpful when it makes you more careful about storms, fire, deep water, strange dogs, snakes, bees, and other things that can hurt people.

If your child doesn't like a new food the first time it is tried, encourage him (her) to take a few bites. Let your child help you fix simple foods (make jello, break up lettuce for the salad, slice and spread sandwiches with a dull knife, and stir vegetables). When your child helps cook or fix food, he (she) is more eager to eat it.

Give your child some old clothes (shoes, coat, hat); a big cardboard box; a bath towel; and some paper cups and plates to play "make believe." The child can then pretend to be a truck driver, mama, daddy, baby, or another person. Play pretend with your child a few minutes. Ask your child how he (she) feels when the baby cries, the mother is tired, the daddy is cross, or the driver has an accident. It is good for children to try to see what it's like to be an adult.

Make 2 puppets, one with a happy face and one with a sad face. Play with the puppets to act out what made your child happy today. Act out what happened today which made your child angry, sad, or upset. Children can often talk to a puppet, doll, or toy animal about their feelings easier than they can talk to another person.

THE CHILD SHOWS PRIDE IN SELF.

Encourage your child to look his (her) best. Help your child look his (her) best by being neat and clean. Help your child feel at ease with his (her) looks and actions at home and at other places. Praise your child when he (she) looks good and does something well. Be a good example for your child by looking and feeling good.

Help your child plant some flowers or vegetables and then take care of them.

Help your child feed and care for the cat, the dog, or the fish.

Help your child to finish what your child starts: make valentines, dye Easter eggs, make Christmas cards, draw pictures, take a bath, tie shoe laces, care for plants and animals, set the table, take out the trash, clean up, and pick up toys and put them away. **PRAISE** your child when he (she) does something well.

Use your child's name when you talk to your child.

Do not talk about your child in front of him (her).

Give your child a place to call his (her) own, to play quietly, to show things that are made, to relax, and to daydream.

Give your child time to dress himself (herself), brush teeth and hair, take a bath, and use the toilet alone as soon as he (she) is able. At first, stand by to help if help is needed. But let your child do it, even when it takes longer—or when it doesn't get done exactly right at first.

Let your child collect things that are treasures and then show these things to others.

Take time to listen to your child when he (she) wants to tell you something.

Take to time to look when your child says, "Watch me!"

Let your child "show off" something that he (she) can do for friends and relatives. (But do not let your child "hog" the whole visit.)

Spend some time every day (at least 5-10 minutes) with your child alone for a private and personal chat. Talk at bedtime or tell your child a story at bedtime.

Treat your child like a friend.

Talk about some things you did when you were a child. (Children love stories about their parents and grandparents when they were little.)

Read a familiar story, but use your child's name instead of the name in the story.

Make up a story about your child and something good he (she) did today. Tell the story.

Show that you **like** *your child with a hug, a kiss, or a touch.*

THE CHILD ENJOYS LEARNING AND LOOKS FORWARD TO GOING TO SCHOOL AND OTHER NEW PLACES.

Encourage your child to try new things and to look forward to going to new places. Talk about going to school. Teach your child new and fun things. Take your child to new and fun places where he (she) can enjoy learning.

Praise your child when he (she) learns how to do each new thing. Everything is new and interesting to a child! Make the most of your child's curiosity and interest in learning. Encourage your child to do many different things.

Show your child that you have fun and enjoy learning and talking about the new things that you have done and learned together.

Teach your child how to take good care of books.

Wash hands before touching a book.

Turn pages carefully.

Check to see that the book is in a safe place.

Show your child how to take care of toys so that the toys won't get scratched or broken.

Find out where your child will go to school. When your child will be 5 before November 1 of the school year, register your child to attend kindergarten. Talk about what children do at school and how your child can make new friends. Talk about teachers in a friendly way. Let your child meet his (her) kindergarten teacher and see the classroom ahead of time. Show your child pictures and read aloud books about children in school and kindergarten. Invite the teacher to your house or visit her house, if possible.

Make sure that your child has the immunizations that are required for school entrance. Take your child to the health department or to your family physician for these immunizations.

Show your child how to hold scissors and to cut with them.

Show how to put newspapers down when paint, glue, or other messy things are used.

Show how to clean the floor with a rag when something is spilled.

Talk about what to expect before you go to someplace new. Take your child to movies, plays, fairs, museums, libraries, parks, pet shops, the mountains, the ocean, the lake, or the river. Take your child on nature walks, on trips by train, bus, car, or plane. Visit lots of different places and people with your child. While you're there, talk about the things you do and see and the people you meet. Answer your child's questions.

THE CHILD GETS ALONG WELL WITH OTHER CHILDREN AND ADULTS.

Encourage your child to play with, talk with, and listen to other children and adults. Set a good example for your child in how you treat other children and adults.

SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO DO THESE THINGS. THEN LET YOUR CHILD TRY TO:

Talk with many different people and play with many children.

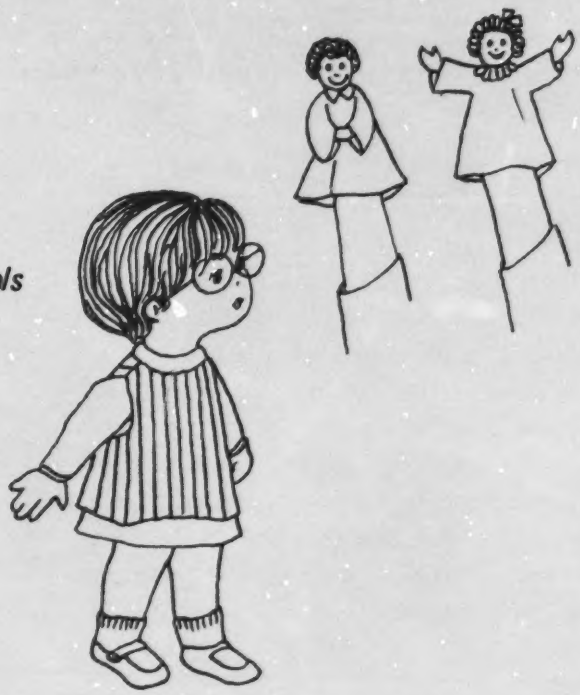
Invite other children to play at your home.

Visit other children and adults in their homes when invited. Before your child goes, talk about how to act with other people and their things.

Practice meeting people, saying "please," "thank you," and other courtesies at home.

Learn to share toys, take turns, and be good winners and good losers.

Treat other children and adults in a friendly way, talk with them, and listen to them and their ideas.



Use puppets, dolls, or stuffed animals to practice saying:

"May I have a cookie, please?"

"I'm sorry that I broke it."

"I had a good time."

"Thank you for the present."

Meet your friends and relatives, the babysitter, mailman, policeman, store clerk, and other adults. Introduce your child by name and let your child talk with these people.

Understand that people are free to feel angry, sad, jealous, and other emotions. . .but not free to act with force. People use **VOICES** not fists, and **TALKING**, not hitting, biting, or kicking. When you see a child in danger of hurting himself (herself) or someone else, act quickly to prevent harm. Then explain to the child why this was dangerous and suggest how to solve the problem safely.

Do nice things for other people.

Take your child's outgrown clothes and toys to a poor family.

Visit a friend or relative who's sick.

Pick some flowers for a neighbor.

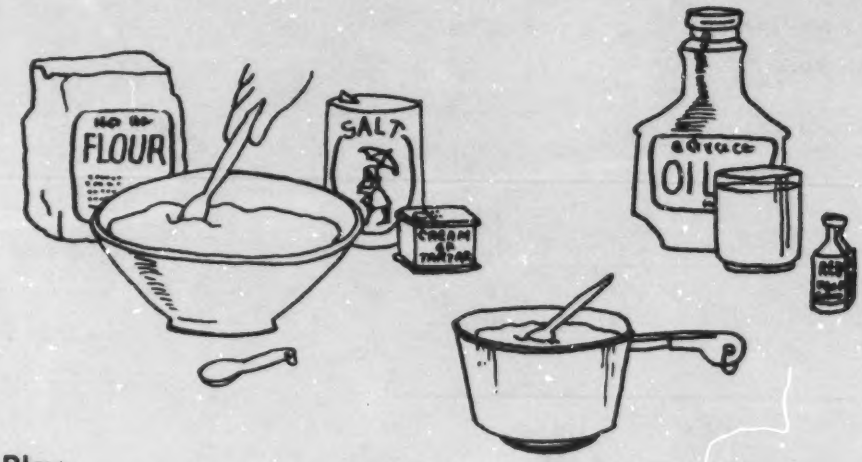
Bring a person who is sick in bed a glass of water.

Share others' good feelings. Tell other children and adults "That's good," when they do something well or do something nice.

Make things for gifts for your family and friends for Christmas, birthdays, Easter, and other special events.

RECIPES FOR MATERIALS FOR THE SKILL ACTIVITIES

Baked Dough Recipe: Combine 2 cups all purpose flour and 1 cup salt in a bowl. Add 1 cup water a little at the time, mixing as you pour. Knead until dough is smooth. Children can then use the dough to model objects. Bake 1 hour at 200°; when cool, objects may be painted.



Cooked Play Dough Recipe: Combine 1 cup flour, ½ cup salt, and 2 tablespoons cream of tartar. Add 1 teaspoon oil, 1 cup water, and a few drops of food coloring. Mix thoroughly. Place on stove over medium heat and cook for about 3 minutes, stirring constantly. The mixture is done when it begins to pull away from the sides of the pan. Cool and knead. This dough keeps well when refrigerated in a covered container in between uses.

Modeling Clay Recipe: Mix 1 cup of flour, 1/3 cup of salt, and 2 tablespoons of water. Stir until mixed.

Fingerpaint Recipe: Add 3 tablespoons of corn starch to 1 cup of boiling water. Add food coloring and stir until thick.

Paste Recipe: Add cold water to 1/2 cup of flour until it is as thick as cream. Then simmer on low heat, stirring constantly for 5 minutes.

THINGS TO COLLECT FOR THE SKILL ACTIVITIES

Bottles:	Clean plastic milk bottles, quart or liter drink bottles
Boxes:	Different sized/shaped gift boxes, hosiery boxes, dress boxes with handles, shirt boxes, shoe boxes, large appliance boxes
Building Supplies:	Scrap wood, nails, bricks, linoleum scraps, sandpaper
Buttons:	Different sized/shaped buttons, different colored large buttons
Cans:	Spice cans, cocoa cans, baby powder cans, soup cans, etc.
Clothes:	Old neckties, hats, scarves, dresses, shirts, socks, shoes, etc.
Containers:	Plastic refrigerator containers, margarine cartons, egg cartons, cereal boxes, oatmeal containers, salt boxes, aluminum tins, orange juice containers, fruit or vegetable wooden crates, jars with screw lids, baby food jars
Kitchen Supplies:	Round or square pans, dull knife, rolling pin, old spoons, plastic glasses, sponges
Labels:	Labels from groceries, household products, etc.
Outside Things:	Thin branches, different sized/shaped leaves, rocks pebbles, shells, sand
Paper Products:	Cardboard, scrap paper from work, paper plates, paper cups
Pictures:	Pictures of people, animals, foods, etc., from old magazines and newspapers; family photographs; greeting cards; picture post cards; comic strips from newspaper

Sewing Supplies:	**Thread, pieces of yarn, thread spools**
Stamps:	**Used postage stamps, trading stamps, Easter Seals**
Miscellaneous:	**Decks of playing cards, wire coat hangers, nut shells (especially walnuts), rags, rope, string, rubber bands, old automobile tires**

INEXPENSIVE THINGS TO BUY FOR THE SKILL ACTIVITIES

Bells (small type from dime store)

Bread

Chalk

Clothespins (spring type)

Construction paper

Cornstarch

Crayons

Dried peas or beans

Food coloring

Flour

Glue or paste

Liquid starch

Cotton balls

Cotton swabs

Paper muffin cups

Glazed shelf paper

Brown wrapping paper

Tin foil

Waxed paper

String

Macaroni (large)

Paper cups

Paper plates

Paper towels

Salt

Sandpaper

Scissors (child-sized)

Seeds

Soap (bar)

Shoe strings

Soda straws

Tape (transparent and masking tape)

Flower pots

Burlap

Yarn

Ribbon

THINGS THAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO WITH YOUR HELP

Stringing Beads:

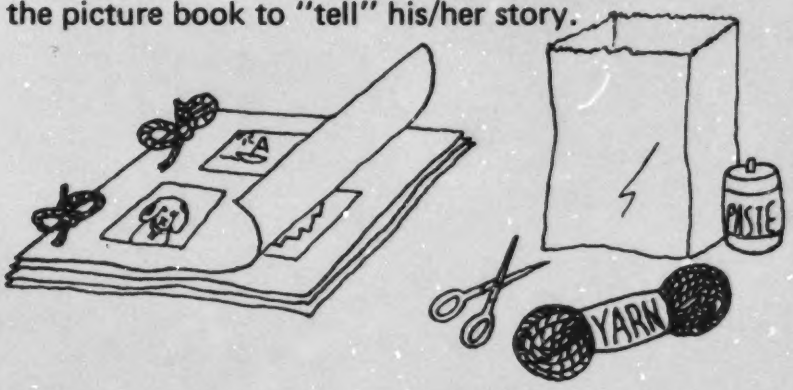
Take a blunt plastic yarn needle and an 18" to 24" piece of string or yarn. An old shoe string will work fine, too. Let your child put things on the string like raw, large macaroni, large buttons.

Puzzles:

Cut out a simple picture. Paste the picture on cardboard. Cut pictures into 4-5 pieces. Put pieces into an envelope for your child to keep.

Books:

Make pages out of old sacks, construction paper, or clear plastic bags and staple together with yarn. Paste pictures from old magazines, greeting cards, photographs, or pictures the child has drawn onto the paper or slip pieces into bag. Let the child use the picture book to "tell" his/her story.



THINGS THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILD CAN MAKE FOR INDOORS

Playhouse: To make an inside playhouse, get some old newspapers or cardboard. Cut out windows and doors. Tape the newspapers or cardboard to the sides of your kitchen table so that the table top becomes the playhouse roof. You may want to let the child paint the sides of the "house" using finger paints.

Art Exhibit: To make the art exhibit, take pictures your child has made and tack them on a wall, tape them to the refrigerator, or hang them with clothespins on a piece of string. Change the pictures each week or as often as the child likes. Save the pictures that you take down.

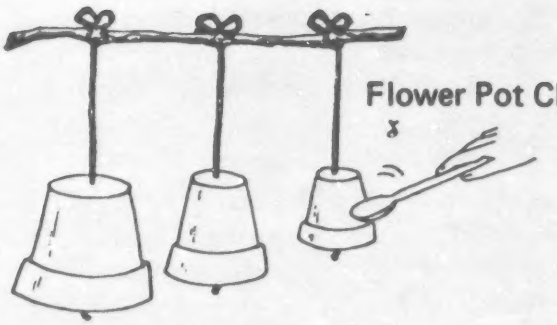
Construction Toys: Ordinary spring-type clothespins can be used to make a variety of toys and shapes by clipping them together.

Musical Instruments:

Triangle: Bend a wire coat hanger into the shape of a triangle. Tie a string to one end. By holding the string and hitting the triangle with a metal spoon, the child can make "music."

Bells: Tie dime store bells on a shoestring or any other kind of string. Hold the string and shake so that the bells ring.

Shaker: Get an empty ice-cream carton, oatmeal box, cocoa can, or spice can and some dried beans or small stones. Put a few stones or beans in the carton and tape the lid closed. Shake the carton.



Flower Pot Chimes: Use flower pots of different sizes. Tie strings on small pieces of wood. Put the string through each pot and hang. Use a wooden spoon to tap the chimes.

Furniture:

Toy Box: Get an empty orange crate from the grocery store. Sand the crate to make sure that there are no splinters left. You may want to paint the wood with a bright color.

Shelves: Shelves for toys or books can be made easily. Get some boards (any length you like) and some bricks or shoeboxes. Place two bricks or shoeboxes on the floor (the length of the board) and place the board on top. Repeat as many times as you like making sure that the shelves are stable and won't fall down. Sand the wood to get rid of splinters.

Desk or Table: To make a desk or table, get two crates or boxes and a wide board. Place the two crates or boxes on the floor as far apart as the board is long. Sand the wood to make sure that there are no splinters. Place the board on top of the crates or boxes. Make sure that the crates are solid so they will not fall.

THINGS THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILD CAN MAKE FOR OUTDOORS

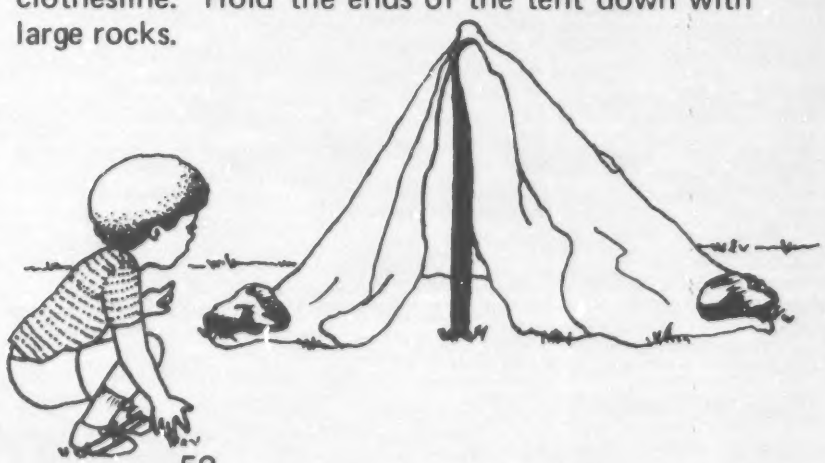
Tire Swing: To make a tire swing, get an old tire and some heavy rope. Tie one end of the rope to the tire and the other end to a strong tree limb. Make sure that the knots will not come undone.

Rope Climb: To make a rope climb, you will need a long piece of rope. Tie knots in the rope every six inches or so. Tie one end of the rope to a strong tree limb making sure that the child can reach the rope and can climb it.

Punching Bag: To make a punching bag, you need a strong burlap bag. Fill the bag with rags or crumbled newspapers and hang it from a tree limb with a piece of rope. Adjust the rope height so the child can hit the bag.

Sand box: To make a sand box, you must have four logs, railroad ties, or 2" X 10' boards. Secure the ends together to make a box. Fill the inside with sand. Old spoons, measuring spoons, cans, and plastic glasses can be used by the child for digging in the sand. The sand box should always be covered tightly when not in use.

Outdoor Tent: To make a tent, you need an old sheet or blanket and a broom handle or a clothesline. Stick the broom handle in the ground and cover it with the sheet or blanket or throw the blanket over the clothesline. Hold the ends of the tent down with large rocks.



THIS IS NOT THE END. . .

The games and ideas in this book are just some of the ways that you can help your child learn. You can make up many others using materials that you have at home and doing things that you and your child **ENJOY** doing together.

There are many other places that you can get ideas to try with your child. Some of these places are :

South Carolina elementary schools, which offer free parent education classes for parents of children from birth to six years old (call the school principal of the elementary school near you for details);

The library, which has books and magazines for parents of young children, as well as lots of things for the child (the librarian can recommend some good ones to use with your child);

TV and radio programs for children such as *Sesame Street, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood,* and *Captain Kangaroo*; and

Community resources, such as churches, Y.W.C.A., Y.M.C.A., nursery schools, county or city playgrounds, community education programs, and other places in your town.

Don't be afraid to spend as much time with your child as you can. Let your child enjoy being a child and have fun using materials that he (she) can learn from. Give your child time to grow up. These years of childhood go by very fast.

Your child's future depends a lot on what you and your child do together **NOW**. Helping your child is the most important job that you have.

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